

WASHINGTON DC - This week, US Congressman Michael Honda, as founder and chair of the Congressional Anti-Bullying Caucus, issued the following statement and published the following op-ed in [The Hill newspaper](#) .

Confronting the Problem of Bullying Head On

By Rep. Michael Honda (D-Calif.)

Newly elected Members of Congress came this week to Washington D.C. for orientation, with a majority of the incoming Democratic members identifying as women, people of color, or a member of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community. Many of these individuals come with histories of disenfranchisement and difficulty. Their stories are of struggle, from working in warzones to growing up with homophobia and bullying. Their arrival in town, and their stories, coincides with DC Public Schools' partnership with The Bully Project to bring together thousands of students and educators for a screening of the film Bully -- all to raise awareness about bullying in the District.

November 15 marks the launch of The Bully Projects 1 Million Kids Campaign in Washington D.C. For the next two weeks, 5,000 students from around D.C. Public Schools will see the film Bully in local theaters, a project initiated by Chancellor Kaya Henderson.

With Washington D.C.'s recent passage of the Youth Bullying Prevention Act of 2012, this project is timely and paves the path towards a safer and more aware environment for youth and adults to live and thrive.

Washington D.C.'s Youth Bullying Prevention Act of 2012 creates an anti-bullying task force that will include representatives from D.C. Public Schools, the Department of Parks and Recreation, the Metropolitan Police Department, the Mayor's Office on GLBT Affairs, the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network, the Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League and other government agencies and community organizations.

States throughout the US are developing better systems for reporting, organizing school and community trainings, and increasing parent involvement in bullying prevention and response, but there is much more to be done. Charged with developing a comprehensive model policy, Washington D.C.'s task force will provide the foundation upon which D.C. government agencies can create long-term anti-bullying strategies.

As founder and co-chair of the Congressional Anti-Bullying Caucus, it also my hope that the incoming congressional members will make anti-bullying measures a priority on their agendas. The cyclical nature of bullying has driven previously-bullied youth to eventually become bullies as well.

According to the National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center, in a recent national survey of 6-10th graders, 13 percent reported bullying others, 11 percent reported being the target of bullies, and another 6 percent said they bullied others and were bullied themselves. I encourage new members to join me in the Congressional Anti-Bullying Caucus and continue to build further coalitions with our youth, communities, educators and elected officials as we address and diminish this issue.

The film Bully, which D.C. youth will watch this week and next, focuses on five families personally affected by bullying. The film aims to raise awareness on the psychological and physical harm that it can cause and the toll it can take on children, parents, and the elderly. I commend the D.C. Public Schools and Chancellor Henderson for making this film accessible to its students and educators, and for moving this important topic further into the national spotlight.

Honda is the founder and chair of the Congressional Anti-Bullying Caucus.